holders, Salient features of this policy adopted with effect from 1st April 2004 for a period of three years; are:

(i) The maintenance dredging requirement of Kolkata Port shall continue to be met by Dredging Corporation of India Limited (DCI).

(ii) All major ports other then Kolkata Port shall float open tenders for their dredging contracts.

(iii) DCI shall have the right of first refusal if its bid is within 10% of lowest technically qualified offer, for both maintenance dredging and capital dredging works including the capital dredging requirements of Kolkata Port.

(iv) To ensure level playing field between the DCI and other Indian dredging companies, the right of first refusal has been allowed to all Indian companies provided their bid is within 10% of the lowest offer. If more than one Indian company including DCI participate in the tender, right of first refusal will go to that Indian Company which has quoted the lowest and is within 10% of lowest technically qualified offer.

**Engagement of foreign companies for dredging**

1888. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether foreign cartels and consortia of dredging companies corner the bulk of dredging operations in India with exhorbitant rates and thereby maintain their monopoly; and

(b) if so, the reasons for engaging foreign companies for dredging?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Present dredging policy provides for finalization of dredging contracts by all major ports, except Kolkata Port, through open tender system. Foreign dredging companies can also participate in the tender process. However, to ensure a level playing field, the policy *inter-alia* provides the right of first refusal to Indian companies provided their bid is within 10% of the lowest offer. While this ensures availability of adequate dredging capacity to meet the increasing requirements of Ports, it also

ensures improvement in dredging services and more competitive rates for the users.

**Models for Highway safety**

1889. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Highways Authority of India had adopted model for highway safety; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) There is no Single Model on road safety adopted by National Highways Authority of India, it follows safety requirements at various stages e.g. Design, Construction and Maintenance (post construction) to ensure Highway Safety.

**Design Stage:** It is ensured that various highway design parameters e.g. sight distances, vertical/horizontal curves, superelevation, road signs/ markings, crash barriers etc. have properly been taken care of in line with Indian Roads Congress (IRC) guidelines/Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport & Highways (M/o S,RT & H) specifications.

**Construction Stage:** Various safety measures e.g. advance warning signs, cordoning of work places etc. are taken during construction stage as per M/o S,RT&H specifications and IRC guidelines.

**Post-Construction Stage:** After construction of the highways, sections are inspected time to time for any deficiencies related to road safety and safety measures are provided under Maintenance contracts. Road Safety audits are also conducted to find out any deficiencies in newly completed sections. Besides, services like ambulances, tow-away